

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 4-8 inclusive remain in this application. The claims stand as rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103. Claim 1 is rejected over Kozubovski et al. (SU 1629463) in view of Gabor et al. (DE 3407467). Claims 2-7 stand as rejected over Kozubovski et al. and Gabor et al. as applied to claim 1 and further in view of Kapgan et al. (US Patent 5,662,362). Claim 8 stands are rejected over Kozubovski et al., Gabor et al., and Kapgan et al, as applied to claim 7 and further in view of Feldstein et al. (US Patent 5,038,994). The above amendment incorporates limitations of claim 3 into claim 1, and cancels claims 2 and 3. The present invention is a method connect casing sections using shape-memory alloy sleeves and radially expanding the ends of the casing sections to bias the sleeve between the casing sections.

Kozubovski et al. discloses a method of connecting wellbore casing strings by expanding one casing into the other by a concentric explosive charge. The elements of using the sleeve of shape memory alloy between the casing strings is not suggested. Gabor et al. suggested a method for making leak-proof joints between two pipes by using a material that ensures a leak-proof seal between the pipes and using a pressure wave to press the smaller diameter pipe into the larger diameter pipe. The shape-memory material is not taught or suggested by Gabor et al. either. Kapgan et al. does suggest use of a shape memory material to form a connection between two pipes. But the configurations shown by Kapgan would not be applicable to connecting casing strings within a wellbore. Kapgan suggests a coupling device, 1, be placed around the ends of the pipes to be connected. The outside of a casing secured in a formation, according to the present invention, would not be accessable for placement of the coupling device according to

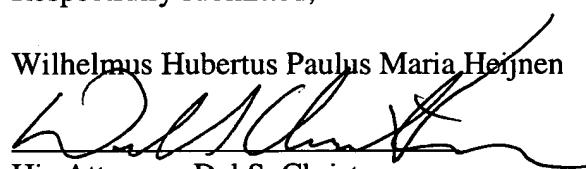
Kapgan. Futher, the shape-memory material of the present invention is used, according to the present specification, page 4, lines 22-28, to improve the seal between the two casing sections. The purpose of the shape-memory alloy of Kapgan is to force the two pipes together. There would be no reason to use the shape-memory of the Kapgan in the connections of over Kozubovski and Gabor because the pipes are forced together by the explosive compression waves in Kozubovski and Gabor. There is therefore no suggestion to combine these referenced to obtain the present invention. This rejection is therefore respectfully traversed, and withdrawal thereof is respectfully requested.

Feldstein et al. does not add the combination of Kozubovski and Gabor the use of the shape-memory alloy to improve the seal between casing joints. Thus, the rejection of claim 8 is traversed for the same reasons the rejection of claims 2-7 is traversed, and withdrawal thereof is respectfully requested.

The rejections each being traversed, allowance of the claims is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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